

CLAIM AMENDMENTS

Listing of Claims:

The following listing of claims replaces all previous listings or versions thereof:

1.- 18. (Canceled)

19. (Previously presented) A method of preventing destructive joint disease associated with rheumatoid arthritis in a human individual with an earlier stage of rheumatoid arthritis comprising:

orally administering about 50 I.U./kg to about 25,000 I.U./kg of IFN- α to said individual;
and

immediately swallowing said IFN- α .

20. (Previously presented) The method of claim 19, wherein about 30,000 units of IFN- α is orally administered.

21. (Previously presented) The method of claim 19, wherein said IFN- α is administered every other day.

22. (Previously presented) The method of claim 19, wherein said IFN- α is human recombinant interferon.

23. (Currently amended) A method of reducing inflammation associated with rheumatoid arthritis in a human individual with rheumatoid arthritis comprising:

orally administering about 50 I.U./kg to about 25,000 I.U./kg of IFN- α to said individual;
and

immediately swallowing said IFN- α .

24. (Previously presented) The method of claim 23, wherein about 30,000 units of IFN- α is orally administered.

25. (Previously presented) The method of claim 23, wherein said IFN- α is administered every other day.

26. (Previously presented) The method of claim 23, wherein said IFN- α is human recombinant IFN- α .

27. (Previously presented) A method of reducing a level of an interleukin in a human individual with rheumatoid arthritis, comprising:

orally administering about 50 I.U./kg to about 25,000 I.U./kg of IFN- α to said individual;
and

immediately swallowing said IFN- α , thereby reducing the level of IL-1, IL-6, IL-8, or a combination thereof in said individual.

28. (Previously presented) The method of claim 27, wherein about 30,000 units of IFN- α is orally administered.

29. (Previously presented) The method of claim 27, wherein said IFN- α is administered every other day.

30. (Previously presented) The method of claim 27, wherein said IFN- α is human recombinant IFN- α .